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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/669,197	09/24/2003	Carl J. Skeps	58695US002	2656
32692	7590	04/06/2004	EXAMINER	
3M INNOVATIVE PROPERTIES COMPANY PO BOX 33427 ST. PAUL, MN 55133-3427			WALLING, MEAGAN S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2863	
DATE MAILED: 04/06/2004				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/669,197	SKEPS ET AL.
	Examiner Meagan S Walling	Art Unit 2863

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 September 2003.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) 13 is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-12, 14 and 15 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 24 September 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12/29/03, 1/20/04.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

1. Claims 1, 4, 5, 7-12, 14, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Eichel et al. (US 6,266,437).

Regarding claim 1, Eichel et al. teaches imaging a sequential portion of the continuously moving web to provide digital information (column 3, lines 12-15), processing the digital information with at least one initial algorithm to identify regions on the web containing anomalies (column 2, lines 33-38), extracting identified regions from the digital information (column 2, lines 38-43), and analyzing the extracted identified regions with at least one subsequent algorithm to determine which anomalies represent actual defects in the moving web (column 2, lines 43-49).

Regarding claim 4, Eichel et al. teaches that the initial algorithm comprises thresholding the digital information and forming a blob list (column 7, lines 30-34).

Regarding claim 5, Eichel et al. teaches that the at least one subsequent algorithm includes thresholding (column 8, lines 43-45).

Regarding claim 7, Eichel et al. teaches that the continuously moving web has a pattern (column 2, lines 16-17), and wherein the initial algorithm uses to process the digital information

is capable of distinguishing between regions of the web containing perfect pattern from regions of the web containing pattern and also possible defects (column 2, lines 33-38).

Regarding claim 8, Eichel et al. teaches that the at least one subsequent algorithm characterizes at least a portion of the web into quality classifications (column 9, lines 35-39).

Regarding claim 9, Eichel et al. teaches that the identified regions contain information, as indicated by size, having at least an order of magnitude less than the digital information (column 6, lines 2-4).

Regarding claim 10, Eichel et al. teaches that the subsequent algorithm includes a plurality of steps, wherein each of the plurality of steps comprises comparing each anomaly against a combination threshold-pixel size criterion (column 7, lines 30-33 and column 8, lines 43-45).

Regarding claim 11, Eichel et al. teaches that an anomaly is identified as an actual defect if any one of the criteria is satisfied (column 9, lines 35-39).

Regarding claim 12, Eichel et al. teaches that at least some anomalies are reported in real time for process monitoring, process control, or both (column 2, line 38).

Regarding claim 14, Eichel et al. teaches imaging a sequential portion of the continuously moving optical film web to provide digital information (column 3, lines 12-15), processing the digital information with an initial algorithm consisting of an intensity threshold followed by defect sorting based on blob size to identify regions on the web containing anomalies (column 7,

lines 29-35), extracting subimages from the identified regions in the digital information (column 2, lines 38-43), and analyzing the extracted anomalies with the following

Regarding claim 15, Eichel et al. teaches an imaging device for imaging a sequential portion of the continuously moving web to provide digital information (column 3, lines 12-15), and computational equipment for processing the digital information with an initial algorithm to identify regions on the web containing anomalies (column 2, lines 33-38), and then analyzing the extracted identified regions with at least one subsequent algorithm to determine which anomalies represent actual defects in the moving web (column 2, lines 43-49).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 2 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eichel et al. in view of Dalmia et al. (US 6,259,109).

Eichel et al. teaches all the limitations of claims 2, 3, and 6 except the limitations of storing or buffering the identified regions prior to analyzing (current claim 2), and that the stored or buffered information is analyzed after the imaging has been performed on the entire web (current claim 3).

Regarding claims 2 and 3, Dalmia et al. teaches storing the recorded image of the web and playing it back for analysis after recording is complete (see abstract).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Eichel et al. with the teachings of Dalmia et al. to store the identified regions prior to analyzing. The motivation for making this combination would be to play back the stored image at a slower speed for easier inspection (Dalmia et al., column 1, lines 49-51).

3. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eichel et al. in view of Floeder et al. (US 2002/0110269).

Eichel et al. teaches all the limitations of claim 6 except the limitation that the continuously moving web is unpatterned.

Floeder et al. teaches locating defects on unpatterned polymeric films (see paragraph 47, lines 1-4).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Eichel et al. with the teachings of Floeder et al. to find defects in unpatterned webs. The motivation for making this combination would be to find defects in all types of materials and to not limit defect detection to patterned webs.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 13 is allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The primary reason for the allowance of claim 13 is the inclusion of the limitation of analyzing the extracted

anomalies with the following subsequent algorithms to determine which anomalies represent actual defects in the moving web, wherein each of the subsequent algorithms consists of an intensity threshold followed by defect sorting on blob size such that for each subsequent algorithm, the intensity threshold increases as the minimum blob size decreases. It is this limitation that has not been found, taught, or suggested in the prior art that makes this claim allowable.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Meagan S Walling whose telephone number is (571) 272-2283. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 8:30 AM to 5 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Barlow can be reached on (571) 272-2269. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

msw



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